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MOTHER SHIPTON INVESTIGATED

W. H. HARRISON.

A.D. 1881

RESEMBLANCE OF MOTHER SHIPTON TO MISTER PUNCH OF FLEET ST.

PUNCH : 1881. MOTHER SHIPTON : 1663.

MOTHER SHIPTON

INVESTIGATED.

THE RESULT OF CRITICAL EXAMINATION IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM LIBRARY, OF THE LITERATURE RELATING TO THE YORKSHIRE SIBYL,

BY

WILLIAM H. HARRISON.

LONDON: 1881.

W. H. HARRISON, 33, MUSEUM STREET.

258. c. 93.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

The alleged prophecies of Mother Shipton and others, about the end of the world—The Mother Shipton of popular belief—Her prophecy in relation to Cardinal Wolsey—Her traditionary birth, marriage, life and death . . . . . Pp. 9-17

CHAPTER II.

The Mother Shipton of romance—Richard Head's book—How Ursula Shipton's mother married the Devil—Formula to be repeated by those who wish to ally themselves to the Evil One—The birth of Mother Shipton—Her wonderful nose—Her babyhood and schooldays—Her alleged prophecies and her death Pp. 18-26

CHAPTER III.

A verbatim reprint of the earliest existing record relating to Mother Shipton—Her prophecies in relation to Cardinal Wolsey, the Duke of Suffolk, Lord Percy, and Lord D'Arcy—Master Besley's record of her sayings—Mother Shipton's prophecies in relation to national and local events . . . . . Pp. 27-35

CHAPTER IV.

Another ancient record relating to Mother Shipton—The version of Lilly, the astrologer—The fulfilment of Mother Shipton's prophecies . . . . Pp. 36-42

CHAPTER V.

A critical examination of the Mother Shipton literature—Modern and ancient fabrications—The career and works of Richard Head, "Gentleman"—A curious experiment in distillation—The plagiarisms of Thompson the playwright—A possible origin of the first record—General agreement in the oldest versions of Mother Shipton's prophecies—Had Mother Shipton an actual existence?—The balance of probabilities Pp. 42

CHAPTER VI.

The Mother Shipton of Art—An early picture of Mother Shipton and Cardinal Wolsey—The origin of "Punch"—Punch in England and Italy—Puppet-shows—Survival of Mother Shipton in Mr. Punch of Fleet Street—Mother Shipton in Westminster Abbey—A kicking effigy of Mother Shipton in Fleet Street—Mother Shipton's skull—A curious picture of Mother Shipton at Stilton—Mother Shipton in Scotland . . Pp. 53

MOTHER SHIPTON AND CARDINAL WOLSEY.

MOTHER SHIPTON INVESTIGATED.

Chapter First.

THE ALLEGED PROPHECIES OF MOTHER SHIPTON AND OTHERS, ABOUT THE END OF THE WORLD—THE MOTHER SHIPTON OF POPULAR BELIEF—HER PROPHECY IN RELATION TO CARDINAL WOLSEY—HER TRADITIONARY BIRTH, MARRIAGE, LIFE AND DEATH.

This critical investigation of the Mother Shipton literature is published early in 1881, the year in which, according to that celebrated Yorkshire prophetess, the world is to come to an end. The best known of the prophecies attributed to her, is the following;

"The world to an end shall come,
In eighteen hundred and eighty one."

This, and other prophecies, said to have been copied from records of unimpeachable antiquity in the British Museum Library, which prophecies in some cases have been *reproduced* in alleged *fac-simile*, have raised

curiosity even in the scientific and sceptical mind, and fanned the flame of imagination in the mind idealistic, as to what amount of truth, or error, or deception, may be at the root of the matter. These questions it is my object to attempt to solve by reference to papers of true antiquity in the national possession.

Prophecies about the end of the world have always had more or less influence. Whiston predicted that the world would be destroyed on the 13th October, 1736, and crowds of people left London, to see, from neighbouring fields, the destruction of the city, which was to be "the beginning of the end."

Numbers of fanatics in Europe, predicted the end of the world in 999. "The scene of the last judgment was expected to be at Jerusalem. In the year 999, the number of pilgrims proceeding eastward, to await the coming of the Lord in that city, was so great that they were compared to a desolating army. Most of them sold their goods and possessions before they quitted Europe, and

lived upon the proceeds in the Holy Land. Buildings of every sort were suffered to fall into ruins. It was thought useless to repair them when the end of the world was so near. Many noble edifices were deliberately pulled down. Even churches, usually so well maintained, shared the general neglect. Knights, citizens, and serfs, travelled eastwards in company, taking with them their wives and children, singing psalms as they went, and looking with fearful eyes upon the sky, which they expected each minute to open, and to let the Son of God descend in glory."*

A panic occurred in Leeds in 1806, during which many in their fear "got religion" for a time, and indulged in a temporary repentance. A Yorkshire hen had been laying eggs in a village close by, inscribed, "Christ is coming." Eventually the writing was discovered to be in corrosive ink, and the trick by which observers were made to believe that the hen laid them in that condition, was found out.

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* *Mackay's Popular Delusions.* London: 1869. Vol. i, p. 252.

The *Pall Mall Gazette* of April 14th, 1879, says that the Mid-Somerset people believed Mother Shipton to have prophesied that on Good Friday, 1879, Ham Hill, near Yeovil, would be swallowed up at 12 o'clock by an earthquake, and Yeovil itself visited by a tremendous flood. Some people actually left the locality with their families to avoid the calamity; others made various preparations for it. On the Good Friday large numbers of people flocked to the vicinity of Ham Hill, to see it swallowed up, but were disappointed.

The following is the most largely circulated form of one of Mother Shipton's reputed prophecies, which of late years has been exercising the public mind. I quote it from p. 450 of *Notes and Queries*, December 7th, 1872, but since, as well as before then, its circulation has been extensive.

"ANCIENT PREDICTION,

"(Entitled by popular tradition 'Mother Shipton's Prophecy,')

"Published in 1448, republished in 1641.

"Carriages without horses shall go,
And accidents fill the world with woe.
Around the world thoughts shall fly

In the twinkling of an eye.
The world upside down shall be
And gold be found at the root of a tree.
Through hills man shall ride,
And no horse be at his side.
Under water men shall walk,
Shall ride, shall sleep, shall talk.
In the air men shall be seen,
In white, in black, in green;
Iron in the water shall float,
As easily as a wooden boat.
Gold shall be found and shown
In a land that's now not known.
Fire and water shall wonders do,
England shall at last admit a foe.
The world to an end shall come,
In eighteen hundred and eighty one."

The present popular ideas about Mother Shipton herself are twofold, as set forth in cheap publications, mostly almanacs with her name on the cover. Some of these profess to give her authentic history with the marvellous elements sifted out; others include the miraculous incidents.

The following account of her life, as adapted to the more sober-minded readers of the present century, is summarised by me *from* a book entitled Mother Shipton and

Nixon's Prophecies, compiled from original and scarce editions by S. Baker, published in 1797, by Denley, Gate Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London. The pamphlet gives information about the life of Nixon, a Cheshire prophet, also about Ursula Shipton, for Ursula is the real name of our heroine. She is stated by Baker to have been born in July 1488, in the reign of Henry VII, near Knaresborough, Yorkshire. She was baptised by the Abbot of Beverley, by the name of Ursula Sonthiel. "Her stature," adds her biographer, "was larger than common, her body crooked, her face frightful; but her understanding extraordinary."

Baker states that she was a pious person, who at the age of twenty-four was courted by one Toby Shipton, a builder, of Skipton, a village four miles north of York; soon afterwards they were married. She became known as Mother Shipton, and acquired fame by means of her extraordinary predictions.

When Cardinal Wolsey intended to remove *his residence to York*, she announced that he

would never reach that city. The Cardinal sent three lords of his retinue in disguise, to inquire whether she had made such a prediction, and to threaten her if she persisted in it. She was then living in a village called Dring Houses, a mile to the west of the city. The retainers, led by a guide named Beasly, knocked at the door.

"Come in, Mr. Beasly, and three noble lords with you," said Mother Shipton.

She then treated them civilly, by setting out cakes and ale before them.

"You gave out," said they, "the Cardinal should never see York."

"No," she replied, "I said he might see it, but never come to it."

They responded, "When he does come, he'll surely burn thee."

"If this burn," said the Reverend Mother, "so shall I."

She then cast her linen handkerchief into the fire, allowed it to remain in the flames a quarter of an hour, and took it out unsinged.

One of her awe-stricken visitors then asked *what she* thought of him.

She answered "The time will come, my lord, when you shall be as low as I am, and that is low indeed."

This was judged to be verified when Thomas Lord Cromwell was beheaded.

Cardinal Wolsey, on his arrival at Cawood, ascended the Castle Tower, and while viewing York, eight miles off, vowed he would burn the witch when he reached there. But ere he descended the stairs, a message from the King demanded his presence forthwith, and while on his journey to London, he was taken ill and died at Leicester.

She accurately foretold the destruction by tempest of the Ouse Bridge and Trinity Church, York, in the following mystical language: "Before Ouze Bridge and Trinity Church meet, what is built in the day shall fall in the night, till the highest stone of the church be the lowest stone of the bridge."

Baker's booklet passed through two editions in 1797. He alleges that some of her prophecies therein were copied from an "original scroll delivered by her to the Abbot of *Beverley; privately* preserved in a noble

family for many years, and lately discovered among other curious and valuable manuscripts." He states that she foretold the time of her death, and that after taking solemn leave of her friends she departed, with much serenity, A.D. 1651, when upwards of seventy years of age. A stone monument was erected to her memory on the high North Road, between the villages of Clifton and Skipton, about a mile from York. The monument represents a woman upon her knees, with her hands closed before her, in a praying posture, and "stands to be seen there to this day," (1797). The following is said to have been her epitaph :—

Here lye's she who never ly'd,
Whose skill often has been try'd,
Her Prophecies shall still survive,
And ever keep her name alive.

Chapter Second.

THE MOTHER SHIPTON OF ROMANCE—RICHARD HEAD'S BOOK—HOW URSULA SHIPTON'S MOTHER MARRIED THE DEVIL—FORMULA TO BE REPEATED BY THOSE WHO WISH TO ALLY THEMSELVES TO THE EVIL ONE—THE BIRTH OF MOTHER SHIPTON—HER WONDERFUL NOSE—HER BABYHOOD AND SCHOOLDAYS—HER ALLEGED PROPHECIES AND HER DEATH.

The miraculous incidents in the life of Mother Shipton, as published in various almanacs and pamphlets during the last 200 years, are, for the most part, culled from a book written by Richard Head. The earliest extant edition of this work is dated 1684, and to it his initials only are attached. Another edition dated 1687 has his name appended to the preface. The first of these editions is in the British Museum Library, and the following is a copy of its title page :—

The
Life and Death
of
Mother Shipton.
Being not only a true Account of her Strange BIRTH,

and most Important Passages of her LIFE, but also of her Prophesies: Now newly Collected, and Historically Experienced, from the time of her Birth, in the Reign of KING HENRY the VII, until this present year 1684, Containing the most Important Passages of State during the reign of these Kings and Queens of *England* following, *viz.*

Henry the VIII.		King *James.*
Edward the VI.		King *Charles* the I.
Queen *Mary.*		King *Charles* the II.
Queen *Elizabeth.*		Whom God Preserve.

Strangly Preserved amongst other writings belonging to an Old Monastry in *York-shire*, and now published for the Information of Posterity. To which are added some other Prophesies yet unfulfil'd. As also Mr. Bolwell's Predictions concerning the *Turk*, *Pope*, and French King, With Reflections thereupon.

London, Printed for Benj. Harris, at the *Stationers-Armes* and *Anchor* under the *Piazza* of the *Royal Exchange.* 1684.

Head's book, in the black-letter edition of 1684, sets forth at considerable length, that in 1486 a woman named Agatha Shipton lived in a place called "Naseborough" near the Dropping Well in Yorkshire. Her parents *died,* and she came to poverty. The Devil

approached her in handsome guise, made love to her, carried her off on a demon steed, displayed before her a phantom but apparently real mansion, in which they were married. He promised to give her power over "haile, tempests, with lightning and thunder," the power of travelling from place to place in an instant, and to place the hidden treasures of the earth at her disposal, on certain conditions.

Allured by these promises "she condescended to all the Devil would have her do. Whereupon he bid her say after him, in this manner: *Raziel ellimiham irammish zirigai Psonthonphanchia Raphael elhaveruna tapinotambecaz mitzphecat jarid cuman haphcah Gabriel Heydonturris dungeonis philonomostarkes sophecord hankim.* After she had repeated these words after him, he pluckt her by the Groin, and there immediately grew a kind of Tet, which he instantly suckt, telling her that must be his constant Custom with her, morning and evening; now did he bid her say after him again, *Kametzeatuph Odel Pharaz Tumbagin Gall* Flemmegen Victow

Denmarkeonto, having finisht his last hellish speech, which the chiefest of his Minions understand not, out of which none but the Devil himself can pick out the meaning; I say, it thundered so horribly, that every clap seemed as if the vaulted roof of Heaven had crackt and was tubling down on her head; and withal, that stately Palace which she thought she had been in, vanisht in a trice; so did her sumptuous apparel: and now her eyes being opened, she found herself in a dark dolesome Wood; a place which from the Creation, had scarce ever enjoyed the benefit of one single Sun-Beam. Whilst she was thinking what course to steer in order to her return, two flaming fiery Dragons appear'd before her tyed to a Chariot, and as she was consulting with her self what was best to be done, she insensibly was hoisted into it, and with speed unimaginable conveyed through the Air to her own poor Cottage."

Signs and wonders thenceforth attended Agatha wherever she went, so that the neighbours were too much afraid of her to *persecute* her, especially as a winged dragon had

once carried her away from the presence of the local magistrate.

In course of time her hellish offspring came into the world. The baby Mother Shipton was at the time of her birth "of an indifferent height, but very morose and big bon'd, her head very long, with very great goggling, but sharp and fiery Eyes, her Nose of an incredible and unproportionable length, having in it many crooks and turnings, adorned with many strange Pimples of divers colours, as Red, Blew, and mixt, which like Vapours of Brimstone gave such a lustre to her affrighted spectators in the dead time of the Night, that one of them confessed several times in my hearing, that her nurse needed no other light to assist her in the performance of her Duty: Her cheeks were of a black swarthy Complexion, much like a mixture of black and yellow jaundies; wrinckled, shrivelled, and very hollow; insomuch, that as the Ribs of her Body, so the impression of her Teeth were easily to be discerned through both sides of her Face, answering *one side to the other* like the notches in a

Valley, excepting only two of them which stood quite out of her Mouth, in imitation of the Tushes of a wild Bore, or the Tooth of an Elephant. . . . . The Neck so strangely distorted, that her right shoulder was forced to be a supporter to her head, it being propt up by the help of her chin. . . . . Her Leggs very crooked and mishapen: The Toes of her feet looking towards her left side; so that it was very hard for any person (could she have stood up) to guess which road she intended to stear her course; because she never could look that way she resolved to go."

This lovely creature was put out to nurse at the charge of the parish. Miraculous and unpleasant incidents occurred around her cradle; her attendants were sometimes goaded to exertion by imps in the form of apes. One day Mother Shipton, cradle and all, were missing; sweet harmony from an unknown source was heard; finally the babe and cradle were found three feet up the chimney. As she grew old her foul fiend of a father visited her daily in the form of a cat, dog, bat, or hog. She was sent to school where, says the

chronicler, "her Mistris began to instruct her, as other children, beginning with the Criscross-row as they call'd it, showing and naming onely three or four Letters, at first, but to the amazement and astonishment of her Mistris; she exactly pronounced every Letter in the Alphabet without teaching. Hereupon her Mistris, shewed her a Primmer, which she read awel at first sight, as any in the School, and so proceeded in any book was shown her."

Later still Mother Shipton began to tell fortunes, and to foretell the future. High and low flocked to her for information about their private affairs. According to Head she foretold the visit of Henry VIII to France, the death of Cardinal Wolsey, the downfall of the Catholic power in England, the death of the Duke of Somerset, also that of Lady Jane Grey, and various events in the reigns of Elizabeth, Charles I, Oliver Cromwell, and Charles II. Finally she died, honoured and esteemed, and a stone was erected to her memory at Clifton, about a *mile from the city* of York.

In very early times Mother Shipton figured in comedy. An old book in the British Museum Library has the following title-page :—

"The Life of Mother Shipton. A new Comedy. As it was Acted Nineteen days together with great Applause. *Folia Ampla Sybillæ* Virg. Written by T. T.—London, Printed by and for *Peter Lillicrap*, and are to be sold by T. Passinger" [Title-page torn here] "the three Bibles on London Bridge." [Then in writing is added the date 1610, but the real date is about 1660.]

The comedy bears a resemblance here and there to Head's narrative. The scene is laid partly in "*Nasebrough Grove* in *Yorkshire ;*" the heroine and prophetess is Agatha Shipton ; no daughter Ursula appears in it at all. On page 15 a village crier is made to announce "O Yes, if any man or woman, in City, Town or Country can tell me tydings of *Agatha Shipton*, the daughter of *Solomon Shipton* Ditch digger lately deceased, let them bring word to the Cryer of the village, and they shall be well rewarded for their pains."

Agatha marries the devil, as in other versions of the story, but cheats him at the last :—

"[Soft Musick and an Angel descends with a Book.]

"*Shipton* despair not but in hope grow strong,
Thou shalt find Mercy though thou hast done wrong;
Read ore this book and in it thou shalt find
The summe of thy aspire to free thy mind
From fear, thy soul secure from harm
Of any Devils! 'tis a happy charme!"

Pluto enters with "all the Devils," and finding Agatha Shipton released from their power exclaims :—

"Was ever Devil gull'd so :
"VVell lets descend and all Hell shall howl
This full fortnight for losse of *Shipton's* soul.

"[*Exeunt* with horrid Musick].

"*Shipton.* So let them roare.
"VVhilst I do all their Hellish Acts despise
The higher powers make me truly wise."

Chapter Third.

A VERBATIM REPRINT OF THE EARLIEST EXISTING RECORD RELATING TO MOTHER SHIPTON—HER PROPHECIES IN RELATION TO CARDINAL WOLSEY, THE DUKE OF SUFFOLK, LORD PERCY, AND LORD D'ARCY —MASTER BESLEY'S RECORD OF HER SAYINGS—MOTHER SHIPTON'S PROPHECIES IN RELATION TO NATIONAL AND LOCAL EVENTS.

The earliest known record at present in existence relating to Mother Shipton, is a pamphlet in good preservation, dated 1641, presented to the British Museum by King George III. The following is a *verbatim* reprint of the whole of it, printer's errors and all:—

"The Prophesie of Mother *Shipton*, In the Raigne of King *Henry* the Eighth. Fortelling the death of Cardinall *Wolsey*, the Lord *Percy* and others, as also what should happen in insuing times. London, Printed for *Richard Lownds*, at his shop adjoining to Ludgate, 1641." [*This is the title-page.*]

"The Prophecie of Mother *Shipton*, in the Raigne of King *Henry* eighth.

"When shee heard King Henry the eighth

should be King, and Cardinall *Wolsey* should be at *Yorke*, shee said that Cardinall *Wolsey* should never come to *Yorke* with the King, and the Cardinall hearing, being angry, sent the Duke of *Suffolke*, the Lord *Piercy*, and the Lord D*arcy* to her, who came with their men disguised to the King's house neere *Yorke*, where leaving their men, they went to Master *Besley* to *Yorke*, and desired him to goe with them to Mother *Shipton's* house, where when they came they knocked at the doore, shee said Come in Master *Besley*, and those honourable Lords with you, and Master *Besley* would have put in the Lords before him, but she said, come in Master *Besley*, you know the way, but they doe not. This they thought strange that she should know them, and never saw them; and then they went into the house, where there was a great fire, and she bade them welcome, calling them all by their names, and sent for some Cakes and Ale, and they drunke and were very merry. Mother *Shipton*, said the Duke, if you knew what wee come about, you would not make *us so welcome*, and shee said the messenger

should not be hang'd; Mother *Shipton*, said the Duke, you said the Cardinall should never see *Yorke*; Yea, said shee, I said hee might see *Yorke*, but never come at it; But said the Duke, when he comes to *Yorke* thou shalt be burned; We shall see that, said shee, and plucking her Handkerchieffe off her head shee threw it into the fire, and it would not burne, then she tooke her staffe and turned it into the fire, and it would not burne, then she tooke it and put it on againe; Now (said the Duke) what meane you by this? If this had burn'd (said shee) I might have burned. Mother *Shipton* (quoth the Duke) what thinke you of me? My love, said she, the time will come when you will be as low as I am, and that's a low one indeed. My Lord *Percy* said, what say you of me? My Lord (said she) shooe your Horse in the quicke, and you shall doe well, but your body will bee buried in *Yorke* pavement, and your head shall be stolne from the barre and carried into *France*. Then said Lord D*arcy*, and what thinke you of me? Shee said, you *have made* a great Gun, shoot it off, for it

will doe you no good, you are going to warre, you will paine many a man, but you will kill none, so they went away.

"Not long after the Cardinall came to *Cawood*, and going to the top of the Tower, hee asked where Yorke was, and how farre it was thither, and said that one had said hee should never see *Yorke*; Nay, said one, shee said you might see *Yorke*, but never come at it. He vowed to burne her when he came to *Yorke*. Then they shewed him *York*, and told him it was but eight miles thence; he said he will soone be there: but being sent for by the King, hee dyed in the way to *London* at *Lecester* of a laske; And Shipton's wife said to Master *Besley*, yonder is a fine stall built for the Cardinall in the Minster, of Gold, Pearle, and precious stone, goe and present one of the pillers to King *Henry*, and hee did so.

"Master *Besley* seeing these things fall out as shee had foretold, desired him to tell him some more of her prophesies; Master, said she, before that *Owes* Bridge and Trinitie *Church meet, they* shall build on the day,

and it shall fall in the night, untill they get the highest stone of Trinitie Church, to be the lowest stone of *Owes* bridge, then the day shall come when the North shall rue it wondrous sore, but the South shall rue it for evermore; When Hares kinle on cold harth stones, and Lads shall marry Ladyes, and bring them home, then shall you have a yeare of pyning hungar, and then a dearth without Corne; A woful day shall be seen in England, a King and Queene, the first comming of the King of *Scots* shall be at *Holgate* Towne, but he shall not come through the barre, and when King of the North shall bee at *London* Bridge, his Tayle shall be at *Edenborough*; After this shall water come over *Owes* bridge, and a Windmill shall be set on a Tower, and an Elme-tree shall lye at at every mans doore, at that time women shall weare great hats and great bands, and when there is a Lord Major at *Yorke* let him beware of a stab. When two Knights shall fall out in the Castle yard, they shall never bee kindly all their lives after; When *Colton Hagge hath* borne seven yeares Crops of corne,

seven yeares after you heare newes, there shall two Judges goe in and out at Mungate barre.

"Then Warres shall begin in the spring,
Much woe to England it shall bring:
Then shall the Ladyes cry well-away,
That ever we liv'd to see this day.

"Then best for them that have the least, and worst for them that have the most, you shall not know of the War over night, yet you shall have it in the morning, and and when it comes it shall last three yeares, betweene *Cadron* and *Aire* shall be great warfare, when all the world is as a lost, it shall be called Christs crost, when the battell begins, it shall be where Crookbackt *Richard* made his fray, they shall say, To warfare for your King, for halfe a crown a day, but stirre not (she will say) to warfare for your King, on paine on hanging, but stirre not, for he that goes to complaine, shall not come backe again. The time will come when *England* shall tremble and quake for feare of a dead man that shall bee heard to speake, then will *the Dragon give the* Bull a great snap, and

when the one is downe they will go to *London* Towne; Then there will be a great battell betweene *England* and *Scotland*, and they will be pacified for a time, and when they come to *Brammammore*, they fight and are again pacified for a time; then there will be a great Battle at *Knavesmore*, and they will be pacified for a while; Then there will be a great battell betweene *England* and *Scotland* at *Stoknmore;* Then will Ravens sit on the Crosse and drinke as much bloud of the nobles, as of the Commons, then woe is mee, for *London* shall be destroyed for ever after; Then there shall come a woman with one eye, and she shall tread in many mens bloud to the knee, and a man leaning on a staffe by her, and she shall say to him, What art thou? and he shall say, I am King of the *Scots*, and she shall say, Goe with me to my house, for there are three Knights, and he will go with her, and stay there three days and three nights, then will *England* be lost; and they will cry twice of a day *England* is lost; Then there will be three knights in *Petergate in Yorke* and the one shall not know of the

other ; There shall be a childe born in *Pomfret* with three thumbes, and those three Knights will give him three Horses to hold, while they win *England*, and all the Noble bloud shall be gone but one, and they shall carry him to Sheriffe Nutton's Castle, six miles from Yorke, and he shall dye there, and they shall choose there an Earle in the field, and hanging their Horses on a thorne, And rue the time that ever they were borne, to see so much bloudshed; Then they will come to *Yorke* to besiege it, and they shall keepe out three dayes and three nights, and a penny loafe shall bee within the barre at halfe a crowne, and without the barre at a penny; And they will sweare if they will not yeeld, to blow up the Towne walls. Then they will let them in, and they will hang up the Major, Sheriffs and Aldermen, and they will goe into Crouch Church; there will be three Knights goe in, and but one come out againe; and he will cause Proclamation to be made, that any man may take House, Tower, or Bower for twentie one yeares, and whilest *the world endureth*, there shall never be

warfare againe, nor any more Kings or Queenes, but the Kingdome shall be governed by three Lords, and then *York* shall be *London*; And after this shall be a white Harvest of corne gotten in by women. Then shall be in the North, that one woman shall say unto another, Mother I have seen a man to day, and for one man there shall be a thousand women, there shall be a man sitting upon St. James's Church hill weeping his fill; And after that a Ship come sayling up the Thames till it come against *London*, and the Master of the Ship shall weepe, and the Marriners shall aske him why hee weepeth, being he hath made so good a voyage, and he shall say; Ah what a goodly Citie this was, none in the world comparable to it, and now there is scarce left any house that can let us have drinke for our money.

" Vnhappy he that lives to see these days,
But happy are the dead Shiptons wife sayes.

"FINIS.

Chapter Fourth.

ANOTHER ANCIENT RECORD RELATING TO MOTHER SHIPTON—THE VERSION OF LILLY, THE ASTROLOGER—THE FULFILMENT OF MOTHER SHIPTON'S PROPHECIES.

William Lilly, the astrologer, published "A Collection of Ancient and Moderne Prophesies. . . . . London, Printed for *John Partridge* and *Henry Blunden*, and are to be solde at the Signe of the *Cock*, in *Ludgate Streete*, and the *Castle* in Cornehill, 1645." This book contains what he calls "Shipton's Prophecy, *after the most exact Copy*," and this version having been published but four years later than the earliest record in the British Museum, it may or may not be the more trustworthy of the two, from the care professedly exercised by Lilly in the selection. I discovered Lilly's version in the course of my researches on this subject in the British *Museum Library*, and do not know that the

authorities there or others were previously aware of its existence. It is not catalogued in the Museum with the Shipton literature.

Line by line I have compared these two earliest versions, and find that they agree tolerably closely. Lilly spells Besley's name "Beasley." "Mungate barre" Lilly spells "Walmgate bar," and rather more of Besley's narrative is set in type in verse. "Stocknmore" is rendered "Storktonmore." Here and there Lilly's version contains trifling additions not in the earlier pamphlet. For instance, it says that after Mother Shipton told Lord Percy that his body would be buried in York pavement and his head carried into France — "They all laughed saying, that would be a great lop between the Head and the Body."

But this 1645 pamphlet is of exceeding interest, because it shows that nearly all the alleged prophecies of Mother Shipton published in these earlier records, had been fulfilled before 1645, that is to say, they have been fulfilled more than 200 years ago. *Lilly's reprint* sets forth the following points

XVIII. A child had been "credibly reported" to have been born at Pomfret with three thumbs.

XIX. The prophecy of the siege of York and its accompanying incidents not fulfilled.

XX. The prophecy about London not fulfilled.

The foregoing category catalogues nearly all Mother Shipton's prophecies as having been fulfilled before 1645. That of the the mariner in the Thames weeping for malt liquor in the partly destroyed city, may more particularly be supposed to yet remain for fulfilment, but Mr. Baker, the writer of her 1797 biography, claims that this last one describes the results of the Great Fire of London in 1666, which left not one house between the Tower and the Temple. This fire, at all events, occurred long after Mother Shipton's death and the publication of her alleged prophecy.

The third copy in point of antiquity, of Mother Shipton's Prophecies in the British Museum, is a black-letter pamphlet, published in 1663, "Printed by *T. P.* for *Fr. Coles*, and are to be sold at his shop at the signe of the Lambe in the Old-Baily, neare *the Sessions House*, 1663." It is entitled

"Mother *Shipton's* Prophesies: with Three and XX more, all most terrible and wonderfull, Predicting strange alterations to befall this Climate of England."

This version agrees closely with Lilly's, but the latter is rather more complete, and is in a better state of preservation. The 1663 edition, however, ends with the following couplet, not given by Lilly:—

In the world old age this woman did fore-tell,
Strange things shal hap, which in our time have fell.

Mother Shipton's prophecies, therefore, were generally recognised as having been fulfilled before the middle of the XVII Century.

Chapter Fifth.

A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF THE MOTHER SHIPTON LITERATURE—MODERN AND ANCIENT FABRICATIONS—THE CAREER AND WORKS OF RICHARD HEAD, "GENTLEMAN"—A CURIOUS EXPERIMENT IN DISTILLATION—THE PLAGIARISMS OF THOMPSON THE PLAYWRIGHT—A POSSIBLE ORIGIN OF THE FIRST RECORD—GENERAL AGREEMENT IN THE OLDEST VERSIONS OF MOTHER SHIPTON'S PROPHECIES—HAD MOTHER SHIPTON AN ACTUAL EXISTENCE?—THE BALANCE OF PROBABILITIES.

Sufficient materials have been brought together in the preceding pages, to give some scope now for critical examination.

The three earliest records in the British Museum Library, in relation to Mother Shipton, agree closely with each other, and none of them contain the lines printed on page 13, in my first Chapter, ending with the too celebrated couplet:—

"The world to an end shall come,
In eighteen hundred and eighty one."

The lines in question, and the notorious *prophecy about* the end of the world, were *fabricated about* twenty years ago, by Mr.

Charles Hindley. The editor of *Notes and Queries* says, in the issue of that journal dated April 26th, 1873 :—

"Mr. Charles Hindley, of Brighton, in a letter to us, has made a clean breast of having fabricated the Prophecy quoted at page 450 of our last volume, with some ten others included in his reprint of a chap-book version, published in 1862."

Most of the precise details in Chapter I, about the birth, life and death of Mother Shipton, are fabrications which have been reproduced time after time in chap-books. There is no absolute evidence that any one of the details is true, but there may be some foundation for the incident narrated about Cardinal Wolsey.

The whole of the details in Chapter II, which have interested the public for 200 years, are fabrications. "Richard Head, *gentleman*," drew the contents of every page of his book from his own inner consciousness. His preface to the oldest edition of his work extant (1684), is amusing, and among other items sets forth as follows, how he obtained and *dealt with* the alleged Shipton manuscript :—

"Many old Manuscripts and rusty Records I turned over, but all in vain; at *last* I was Informed by a Gentleman (whose Ancestors by the Gift of King *Henry* the Eighth, enjoyed a *Monastary* in these parts) that he had in his keeping some Ancient Writings which would in that point satisfie my desire, were they not so Injured by Time, as now not legible to Read; however, I not despairing to find out their meaning, with much Importunity desired to have a sight of them; which having obtained, I took of the best Galls I could get, beat them grosly, and laid them to steep one day in good White-wine, that done, I distilled them with the Wine; and with the Distilled Water that came off them, I wetted handsomely the old Letters, whereby they seemed as fresh and fair as if they had been but newly Written."

From the above it would appear that even in Head's days there was a desire for earlier manuscripts about Mother Shipton.

Chemists will appreciate the novelty of the distilling operation, in which, on the application of heat as described, water came over before alcohol.

The Richard Head, who has so long misdirected the thoughts of large numbers of people, was the son of a minister in Ireland. Head's father was massacred "with many *thousands more*" in 1641. Mrs. Head then *brought her son to* England, and he com-

pleted his studies at Oxford. He could not afford to remain until he obtained a degree, so turned bookseller. He married, and soon afterwards became a ruined man, in consequence, says Erskine Baker, "of two pernicious passions, viz., poetry and gaming, the one of which is for the most part unprofitable, and the other almost always destructive." He retired to Ireland, where, in 1663, he wrote his only dramatic piece, *Hic et Ubique*, by which piece he acquired great reputation, and some money. As a literary man he had several ups and down in the world; his writings had a strong tinge of indecency. He was drowned in the year 1678, while crossing to the Isle of Wight.

The other piece of fiction of high antiquity, relating to our heroine, is the comedy of the *Life of Mother Shipton*, mentioned on page 25, which is said to have been acted nine days with great applause. The author was one T. Thompson. The British Museum authorities consider the date of the Mother Shipton comedy, to be about 1660, so it ranks with the earliest existing narratives relating to the subject.

In the "Lives and Characters of the *English Dramatick* Poets. . . . . First begun by Mr. *Langbain*, improv'd and continued down to this Time, by a Careful Hand, *London:* Printed for *William Turner*, at the *White Horse*, without *Temple Bar*, 1699," Langbain describes Thomas Thompson as—

A Poor Plagiary, that could not disguise or improve his Thefts. These two following Plays go under his Name; viz.

The English Rogue, a Comedy, 4*to*. 1688, acted (says the Title) before several Persons of Honour, with great Applause, and dedicated to Mrs. *Alice Barrett*.

Mother Shipton, her Life; 4*to*. The Author hereof says, 'twas acted Nine Days together, with great Applause. Plot from a Book so called in the Prose, 4to., but most of the Characters and Language from *The City Madam*, and *The Chast Maid of Cheapside*.

Thompson's play of *The English Rogue*, was also dramatised from a book by Richard Head, for whose dubious writings Thompson, therefore, seems to have had admiration.

There may be other ancient versions of Mother Shipton's prophecies, but none are known of an earlier date than 1641, and I have dealt with the oldest I can find in the *British Museum* Library. *Notes and Queries*,

of July 25th, 1868, contains a letter from an anonymous writer, making mention of some old editions which may be in other collections. His exceptionally valuable remarks about Mother Shipton and her history I abridge as follows :—

Although the fact of the existence of Mother Shipton rests wholly upon Yorkshire tradition, she can scarcely be regarded as a myth. According to the tradition, the place of her birth was on the picturesque banks of the river Nidd, opposite to the frowning towers of Knaresborough Castle, and at a short distance from St. Robert's Cave—a spot famous for mediæval legends and modern horrors. She first saw the light a few years after the accession of Henry VII. It was not until fourscore years after her death that any account of her extraordinary predictions was recorded in print. A few years before the breaking out of the Civil War, King Charles I frequently passed through Yorkshire, and perhaps the prophecies of the Yorkshire witch then prevalent in the county, captivated the imagination of some follower of the Court, who on his return to London concocted the first pamphlet. It soon became popular, and the following year two reprints appeared, with some additional prophecies. In 1643 a third edition was published, which was followed by two others a few years afterwards. In 1662 and 1663, after the Restoration, the tracts already described were reprinted with some additional matter, and in 1667 the notorious Richard Head, author of several works of a loose description,

invented her biography, and gave to the world a new version of her prophecies. This production has been accepted by the popular taste as the authentic history of the Yorkshire witch, and has been reprinted and sold in all parts of the kingdom. Drake, the historian of York, states that Cardinal Wolsey never came nearer to York than Cawood, which makes good a prophecy of Mother Shipton. "I should not have noticed this idle story," he adds, "but that it is fresh in the mouths of our country people at this day; but whether it was a real prediction, or raised after the event, I shall not take upon me to determine. It is more than probable, like all the rest of these kind of tales, the accident gave occasion to the story." (See Eboracum, p. 450, and get date of it).* In a *History of Knaresborough*, published by Harcourt about a hundred years ago, Mother Shipton's traditionary prophecies are described as being still familiar in her native town. The much mutilated sculptured stone near Clifton, Yorkshire, universally called "Mother Shipton," was the figure of a warrior in armour, which had been a recumbent monumental statue; it was probably brought from the neighbouring Abbey of St. Mary, and placed upright as a boundary stone. It has been removed to the museum of the Yorkshire Philosophical Society.

After clearing palpable fiction out of the way, we are left face to face with three of the earliest editions of Mother Shipton's prophecies, published respectively in 1641, 1645,

* *The date of Drake's Eboracum* is 1736.—W.H.H.

and 1663. These agree closely with each other in their details, the variations being few and unimportant. They appear to have been written seriously and with a desire for truth, in which they differ marvellously from the Shipton literature of the last 200 years.

A critical examination of the oldest record, reprinted in full in Chapter III, reveals indications that the first part was written by one man, and the second part by another; the former was the most able of the two. The latter part consists of Besley's statements, evidently made originally in doggerel verse, but set by the printer, for the most part, in prose. The rhymes can be traced.

Lilly's 1645 version is the best of the three, and it preserves more of Master Besley's rhymes in their original form. For instance, the 1641 edition contains the following lines :—

> Then Warres shall begin in the spring,
> Much woe to England it shall bring :
> Then shall the Ladyes cry well-away,
> *That* ever we liv'd to see this day.

Lilly's edition gives the following more complete quotation from an older version :—

The North shall rue it wondrous sore,
But the South shall rue it for evermore.
When wars shall begin in the spring
Much wo to England it will bring:
Then shall the Ladies cry well a-day,
That we ever liv'd to see this day.
Then best for them that have the least
And worst for them that have the most.

Not only is there this internal evidence of the pamphlets being more or less true copies of earlier records, but Lilly, in his *Collection of Ancient and Modern Prophecies*, published in 1645, makes this direct statement in the "introduction to the reader :"—

"Mother Shipton's" [prophecy] "was never yet questioned either for the verity or antiquity; the North of England hath many more of hers."

Did such a person as Mother Shipton ever live ? Cardinal Wolsey was at Cawood in 1530, and the earliest record in existence of Mother Shipton, is dated 1641, leaving a gap of 111 years between the chief incident of her career and the oldest record thereof. But *Lilly in 1645 speaks* of various earlier records

of her prophecy being then in existence, and of the facts being in his day undisputed. Some of those older records, which between 1641 and 1663 were reprinted with much fidelity, might possibly have been issued, if not in the lifetime of the sibyl herself, at all events in the lifetime of some of those who dwelt in York when the occurrences took place. After Cardinal Wolsey's death, Mother Shipton told Master Besley to take a jewelled pillar out of York Cathedral and to present it to Henry VIII. It might be asked how Master Besley could do this at the mere instigation of an old woman, and without the consent of the Archbishop. But history shows that the See of York was vacant for nearly a year after Cardinal Wolsey's death, so that while it was in the charge of underlings, at a time when Henry VIII began to seize church property in all directions, this Mr. Besley may have had the power to do what is recorded of him. Besley's name is spelt "Beasley" in Lilly's reprint of the Shipton prophecy, and I find in Drake's *Eboracum* that in the year 1486 a John Beasley was one of the Sheriffs of York.

The admirer of Mother Shipton may have been his son; at all events people of that name *were* living in York before the incident with Cardinal Wolsey is said to have occurred.

In 1539, Richard Layton, Dean of York, pawned some of the jewels of the Cathedral, which is a corroborative illustration of the treatment of church property at that period.

Not so very long after the event, then, a clear record of the interview of Mother Shipton with the three lords found its way into print, and the writer lengthened the narrative by tacking some of Master Besley's doggerel verses to the end of it. If there were no truth in the story, it was one which would have given much offence to the immediate descendants of the noblemen whose names had been so freely used in public.

Lilly, as already stated, makes no question that Mother Shipton existed, and says that in his time the authenticity of her prophecies was undisputed. He had means, which we in modern times have not, of drawing a conclusion, and altogether it is tolerably certain that *Mother Shipton* had an actual existence.

Chapter Sixty.

THE MOTHER SHIPTON OF ART—AN EARLY PICTURE OF MOTHER SHIPTON AND CARDINAL WOLSEY—THE ORIGIN OF "PUNCH"—PUNCH IN ENGLAND AND ITALY—PUPPET-SHOWS—SURVIVAL OF MOTHER SHIPTON IN MR. PUNCH OF FLEET STREET—MOTHER SHIPTON IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY—A KICKING EFFIGY OF MOTHER SHIPTON IN FLEET STREET—MOTHER SHIPTON'S SKULL—A CURIOUS PICTURE OF MOTHER SHIPTON AT STILTON—MOTHER SHIPTON IN SCOTLAND.

The cover of the earliest pamphlet extant in relation to Mother Shipton, namely, that dated 1641, has a coarsely executed alleged likeness of her on the front page. The artist seems to have had no deliberate intention to make her specially ugly; she has no hooked nose, hump, or abnormal dress. The portrait would equally well have done for Queen Elizabeth or any other respectable woman of about Mother Shipton's time.

The 1663 pamphlet has a picture of a more dramatic nature, on the front page. An accurate copy of it is given in the engraving *printed* upon page eight herein. In this cut

Cardinal Wolsey, suitably attended, is represented on Cawood Tower, viewing York Minster in the distance, In front of the tower and larger than that edifice, is Mother Shipton uplifting her hand in an attitude of warning, whilst down in the right-hand corner is a portrait of "Mr. Saltmarsh," emerging from an uncomfortably small tent, which he has been clever enough not to ignite with the blazing torch he is bringing from its limited recesses. King Henry VIII is represented in the left hand lower corner of the cut.

Mr. Saltmarsh was a native of "Yilford" in Essex. On the 4th of December, 1647, he told his wife that he had a mission from God to make known to the army what the Lord had revealed unto him. He procured a horse, made his way to Windsor, where "without any respect" he announced to various officers and military authorities that evil days were in store for the army, and "that God was purposed to destroy the wicked, and draw the Saints to Himself." The chronicler adds, "Some said that he looked *like one distracted*, and that he had been sick *and was not well* recovered," which Mr. Salt-

marsh denied. Having fulfilled his mission he returned home. "On Friday, Decem. 10th, he said he had finished his course, and must goe to his Father, In the afternoone he said his Head aked: and laid himselfe upon his Bed. On *Saturday*, Decemb. 11, hee was taken speechlesse, and about 4 or five of the clock in the afternoon Dyed." So ends the sad story of an unbalanced psychical sensitive.

The Mother Shipton depicted in this cut, in several respects bears a striking resemblance to Mr. Punch of Fleet Street; they may be seen face to face in the frontispiece to this work. The points of resemblance are —(1) The hooked nose and chin. (2) The peaked cap. (3) The hump. (4) The dress with prominent lines. (5) The uplifted hand. (6) The grasping of a weapon with the other hand. (7) Each of them faces an important individual in a peculiar cap, perched upon an elevated structure—Cardinal Wolsey in the one instance; Toby in the other.

The first volume of *Punch* was issued in 1841, and in the first article admits its ruling *personality* to be derived from the Punch of

the puppet-shows. The front page of the first number represents Punch in his little street theatre, hanging the Devil, who in the agonies of strangulation, with his tongue lolling out, seems loth to drop his pitchfork from his weakened hand. Nine years previously, in January, 1832, a comic weekly paper, *Punchinello*, had been started in the same office, 13, Wellington Street, Strand, but expired with the issue of its tenth number. Punchinello was represented with the nose of the modern Punch, but he had no hump or peaked cap.

The origin of Punch is veiled in obscurity. The general belief of the few writers on the subject is that Silvio Fiorillo invented Pulcinella about the year 1600, and introduced him into the staff of theatrical buffoons at Naples. Quadrio in his *Storia d'ogni Poesia*, would spell the name "Pullicinello" from *Pulliceno* or "turkey-cock," an allusion to the beak of that bird. Baretti has it Pulcinella, or "hen-chicken," whose *cry is* said to resemble the voice of Punch. *The earliest record* in relation to the exist-

ence of Punch in England is perhaps in the *Tatler* newspaper of July 21st, 1709.

George Cruikshank and a colleague wrote thus about the origin of the English puppet-show Punch :—

The great exhibitor of Punch immortalised, we will say, by Steele, notwithstanding the disesteem into which that delightful writer has fallen, is Mr. Powell ; and in No. 44 of the *Tatler*, Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq., complains that he had been abused by Punch in a Prologue, supposed to be spoken by him, but really delivered by his master, who stood behind, "worked the wires," and, by "a thread in one of Punch's chops," gave to him the appearance of enunciation. These expressions are important inasmuch as they show a method of performance and a degree of intricacy in the machinery not now known. At present the puppets are played only by putting the hand under the dress, and making the middle finger and thumb serve for the arms, while the fore-finger works the head. . . . . Powell's show was set up in Covent Garden, opposite to St. Paul's Church ; and the *Spectator* (No. 14 *) contains the letter of the sexton, who complained that the performances of Punch thinned the congregation in the Church, and that, as Powell exhibited during the time of prayers, the tolling of the bell was taken, by all who heard it, for notice of the intended commencement of the exhibition.†

* Attributed to Steele.

† See *Punch and Judy*, by Payne Collier and George Cruikshank. *Bell and Daldy*, London : 1870.

Many particulars about Powell are stated in "A Second Tale of a Tub : or the History of Robert Powell, the Puppet showman," London: 1715. The frontispiece gives a picture of the exhibition, in which Punch is represented in a sugar-loaf hat, with no hooked nose or chin ; a front view of him being given, no hump is visible. This portrait would not now be recognised as a likeness of Punch ; it does not nearly so much resemble him as does the 1663 portrait of Mother Shipton, now first brought face to face with her lively relative.

Celebrated contributors to *Punch*, have speculated that as it was recorded in 1715 that "the Dutch were the most expert nation in the world for puppet-shows," probably puppet-shows and Punch were brought to England when King William came over from Holland in 1688, twenty-one years before the earliest record of his advent.

But in the Punch-like likeness of Mother Shipton published in 1663, are several of the *characteristic* features of Punch, indicating *his existence in England* twenty-five years be-

fore the supposed advent. Perhaps his features have been handed down from time immemorial in English puppet-shows, but whether under the name of Mother Shipton, Mr. Punch, or somebody else, there is no evidence to show.

Some writers suppose Punch to be a survival of the Pontius Pilate of the Miracle Plays. A writer in *Notes and Queries*, Dec. 18th, 1869, "had reason to believe that 'Punch' was of Italian origin, drawing his name 'Ponchinello' from a mystery-play, wherein figured Pontius Pilate, Judas (Judy), and perhaps Tobias, otherwise Toby the dog."

Charles Mac Farlane, in his *Recollections of the South of Italy* (London: 1846), suggests that, as puppet plays and a kind of Punch are found all over the world, Punch had probably several distinct origins, at different times, in different countries. This is very likely, because a caricaturist who wished to distort the human form, would naturally seize upon that prominent feature, the nose, and pull it, then draw out the chin, and by a very little exercise of original genius, add a hump.

But the resemblance of Mother Shipton to

Mr. Punch of Fleet Street extends not alone to these points, but to attitude and to dress: hence in ancient times there apparently must have been some bond of union between the two celebrities. Have I succeeded in restoring an affectionate son to his long lost mother, or is Mr. Punch none other than Mother Shipton herself, cunningly disguised? Every boy knows that except when he is singing a song of triumph, Mr. Punch's squeal does not reveal the nature of his emotions, rage and pleasure provoking from him the same squeak. Hence, if Mr. Punch first learns from these pages that his disguise in male attire is discovered, so that he squeals with rage, or if it be that he finds himself restored to his long lost Reverend Mother, consequently squeaks with pleasure, wild noises, calculated to frighten cab horses and to make pedestrians turn pale, may be expected to be heard issuing from the Fleet Street Office, for three or four days after the publication of this book, but by a little carefully planned assistance from *Scotland Yard,* street accidents may be prevented. *As Ingoldsby* might have said:—

And we shall hear his song of fear, and shrillest
squeal and squeak,
Come from his Fleet Street counting house for
nearly half a week—
For three long days and three long nights, list
to those sounds of fear,
When Punch's wails will cease to rend the
listening public ear.

In the absence of evidence as to the origin of the physical frame of the English Punch, perhaps as good a speculation as any may be that in the English puppet-shows of the olden time were one or more conventional figures which were ordinarily used for comic work, their dresses being slightly altered to suit the particular character represented. Economy would naturally bring this to pass. A figure with a hooked nose and hump might have been Mother Goose one day, and somebody else the next; thus, when Punchinello proper came from Italy, his figure may have been already here, as depicted in the portrait of Mother Shipton engraved in 1663. The minds of the artists in former times, who drew rough pictures of celebrities for engraving, would be likely to limn them as they

were commonly exhibited to the public. However this may have been, one fact is clear, namely, that in the Punch of to-day are the leading characteristics of Mother Shipton's portrait engraved in 1663; so

Though mountains crack from base to crown,
Though empires wax and wane,
Though Mother Goose be no more seen,
Though chaos come again—
Though Goody Twoshoes fade for aye,
Though perish Mother Bunch,
Good Mother Shipton still will live
In dear old Mr. Punch.

A wax effigy of Mother Shipton stood in Westminster Abbey* until a somewhat recent date. Wax effigies of other noted dead persons were once exhibited there, including Edward VI, Queen Elizabeth, James I, Oliver Cromwell, King William, Queen Mary, Queen Anne, and others. They were richly robed, and formed one of the sights of London, known to the public as "The Play of the Dead Volks," and later still, after the dresses had become ragged and dilapidated, as "The

* *Romance of London*, by John Timbs, F.S.A. Vol. II, page 284. *London: Bentley, 1865.*

Ragged Regiment," What remained of this strange collection was removed in 1839.

A correspondent sent to *Notes and Queries* of March 17th, 1866, the somewhat illogical argument that because an effigy of Mother Shipton had been exhibited in Fleet Steet, therefore none was exhibited in Westminster Abbey. The following are his or her words:—

> Mother Shipton was a conspicuous object among the wax figures, not in Westminster Abbey, but in Mrs. Salmon's once popular exhibition in Fleet Street. She was an especial favourite with the juvenile visitors, as she used to put out her leg and kick the shins of anyone who approached her near enough.—A.Pr.

Mr. Edward Hailstone, of Horton Hall, writes to *Notes and Queries* of September 11th, 1879 :—

> In the catalogue of Rackstraw's Museum, exhibited in Fleet Street, London, 1792, is this paragraph—"A figure of Mother Shipton, the prophetess, in which the lineaments of extreme old age are strongly and naturally marked. Also her real skull, brought from her burial place at Knaresborough, in Yorkshire."

The painter in oil colours has felt the attractions of the subject, for a writer in *Notes and Queries* of Aug. 1st, 1868, says that

until within a few years of that date, a large painting of her and the fulfilment of one of her prophecies hung up in the large room of the old Crown and Woolpack Inn, on the Great North Road, Conington Lane, near Stilton.

A sensational engraving of Mother Shipton in a chariot drawn by a reindeer or a stag appeared in *The Wonderful Magazine*, (London: Alex. Hogg, 16, Paternoster Row) 1793, Vol. II, page 225. It is prefixed to a tale woven out of the Mother Shipton history fabricated by Head. The author transfers the scene of much of her life to Melrose. Other attempts have been made to transplant Mother Shipton. The inhabitants of Winslow-cum-Shipton, in Buckinghamshire, have claimed her, and in the traditional lore of East Norfolk she is made to prophecy that

"The town of Yarmouth shall become a nettle-bush. That the bridges shall be pulled up; and small vessels sail to Irstead and Barton Roads." Also, "Blessed are they that live near Potter Heigham, and double-blessed them that live in it."*

*Norfolk Archæology, Vol. II. Norwich: Charles Muskett, Old Haymarket, 1849.